Mbusa (preparation in the forest). The women who have gone to the forest cut the flexible branches of the trees (mienge). Then they fashion a sort of termite's nest in which they hide a handful of musuku leaves. A pole is passed through the nest ... The pole supporting the termite's nest is carried by two women who sing a song in honor of the fiancée: "Mu luendo lulia lwine batebera Na chisungu chifinga cha nkuni." The children also carry bundles of firewood on their backs, after the nakalamba has first annointed them with the red dye of nkula. Then they all come back singing: "Nshimba mulya ya ngombe." The children take up the chorus: "Ngombe isho we ulele, ngombe isho kufula kocho... ." 881

Mbusa (arrival at the village). After returning to the village, they unload the clay and bundles of wood in the hut. The clay will serve to make the fireplace. In this special fireplace, lit with a fresh fire, the famous highly seasoned dish for the wedding is cooked, the namushinwa, consisting of beans, sorghum (millet), chick-peas, lentils, tubers and peas, vegetable marrow and castor. They sing: "Natukalabe Babisa, baleto ku kalaba." [262]

Mbusa (matrimonial symbols). The women put down the white clayey earth, treading it down with charcoal and the red dye of nkula. They put all of it down near the hearth. [364]

The female director of the ceremony /nachimbusa/ then brings in two baskets filled with earthenware mbusa made a long time ago and always used for the same purpose. Please note that the nachimbusa is a sort of priestess whose office is hereditary. It is her job to preside at wedding ceremonies. The mbusa which she uses represent wedding symbols and have various shapes. I was able to purchase some of these mbusa by paying a great deal. Some are shaped like bi-sexual dolls, others are shaped like small vases with spiney walls, yet others resemble flower vases, certain others look like animals, one in the form of a big snail which emits a sound resembling a lion's roar. Once the ceremony /215/ is over, the nachimbusa takes home her mbusa. When she dies, they are buried with her in her grave. During her whole life she carefully hides them in termite nests or under rocks in the river-bed. Here are the names of the various mbusa according to their form or use: chiluwe, chimundu, chimingi posa masamba, chilyobe wa ngoma, mwansa 881 793 [323 532] 552 881

chipepe, mulume wa ngala, chilombo, mangalawila, mwikala chishasha, wingeminino utepauka. 552 881

This is how they proceed. The nachimbusa puts down a large mbusa made of baked clay. It has two paws and is funnel-shaped at the apex; this is the chimundu (big lion). On top of the mbusa she twists flexible tree branches /mienge/ into a circle, then coating them with earth /maloba/ and giving it the shape of a lion. In the upper cavity she places tufts of plants to imitate the mane; the teeth and eyes are imitated by artistically inserted pumpkin and melon seeds. When it is finished, two women come close, imitating the roar of a lion with special mbusa; the meaning of this is to instruct the future husband as follows: "You, if you abandon your wife and if you go alone to the river, you will be caught by the lion" /Iwe nga ukalalekeresha mukashi, waya ku ifwe eke, ukasumwa ne nkalamo/. Please note here that none of these matrimonial symbols is meant to be immoral. Their purpose is to instruct the future spouses in their duties as husband and wife, to give them courage to cope with the everyday dangers of life in the bush, to incite them to stand up courageously to the difficult tasks to which both of them will be bound. 532 881

Nkuni (firewood). In the course of the day, the women have notified the husband to go and get firewood in the forest. He ties a package /chifunda/ containing a small live rat /kapanga mutuntury/ to his bundle /chifinga/. This is a sign that his fiancée has not yet slandered him. If he knows that his fiancée has already spoken ill of him, he will not put a rat in the bundle. During this time the women end their mbusa ceremonies. 881

The fiancé is invited. At this time the singing starts and the drums beat more loudly; the women call the fiancé with the following words: "Kalombo, musha, uko uire teba, taulabwela." The fiancé will thereupon appear carrying the bundle of wood on his back. He is accompanied by his sister or a female cousin. As both enter the hut, and the bundle of wood is /216/ put down, and dancing in the young girl's honor begins, the nakalamba (i.e. the woman who has invited the neighbors to the celebration) unties the bundle of wood and the package. She then takes two chickens; the fiancée sits on one of them in order to kill it /kufwantikisha/, while the nachimbusa sits on the other. Once the chickens have died they are plucked and cooked.

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are solo performances with a definitely dramatic character, and are not round dances of the kind usually seen on the village ground of an evening.

Dancing among the Bemba is done for amusement, but it may be also done 'for respect'. Commoners will dance for their chief: a young man will dance for an older woman or man; a senior man may dance for a senior woman of his wife's family. In such dances of respect it is common for the soloist to dance in front of the person he wants to honour, and to sing definitely to him or her. It is particularly respectful to dance with vitality and dash. I have frequently heard headmen rebuking a crowd of bedraggled young women brought out to dance for me in the rain. The phrase was always the same: 'Rejoice, can't you? Do you want people to think we have no respect? Go on, there! Try to rejoice.' In the chisungu ceremony this type of dance of respect is as important a way of carrying out obligations as the provision of food and beer. It is no mere accident that the chisungu is described as 'dancing the girl'.

The mimes representing domestic and agricultural life are usually more serious performances. They sometimes involve real play-acting and the exact imitation of the animal or the behaviour of the person concerned. In most cases, however, what I have described as mimes are formalized representations of an action, such as pounding grain or sowing seeds, and they tend to resemble the rather stereotyped movements of a kindergarten singing game in this country.

The term 'sacred emblem' is used throughout this account. I have selected this word to translate a Bemba word, *mbusa*, which means 'things handed down'. The *mbusa* are of various types, but they may all be considered as secret in the sense that they either have a secret name or a secret meaning. They are of three types. The first of these are the pottery emblems. These are a series of models of common objects made of fired clay, usually painted with white, black and red. Some of them represent domestic objects (a water pot, a hoe or a pipe), some animals or birds (a crocodile or an egret), some are fertility symbols, and some represent historical characters. Many of them are realistically modelled and easily recognizable, while others are conventional pot designs each with a name. A certain number of designs are common over the whole

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881 778 532 district although there is individual variation in their modelling, while others seem to be of local distribution. I made a collection of about forty-three myself, but think there are likely to be twice that number either made or still remembered in the Bemba country. Each of the pottery emblems has its name and its song.[1]

Larger models of unfired clay decorated with beans, soot, chalk and red dye, are also made in the chisungu hut during the ceremony, and destroyed the same evening. They include, for instance, an enormous snake the coils of which cover the whole floor, a figure of a man and a woman, and lion made of logs covered with clay and with a head of hair. These are also described as *mbusa*.

881 778 531 The second type of *mbusa* are the wall designs. These are rough designs painted on the inside of the initiation hut at a certain stage in the ceremony. Most of them are conventional patterns with names and secret interpretations. Nine of these designs were used in the ceremony I saw, but Brelsford has recorded twenty others.

881 778 The third type of emblem consists of small bundles of objects representing the domestic life of the Bemba, that is to say, essential food of the tribe, such as millet, sorghum, meat, dried fish and salt, as well as fire wood, snuff and the red camwood dye known as *ukula*. Certain groups of trees used in the ceremony are also known as *mbusa*.

THE CEREMONY

881 361 The chisungu ceremony that I attended started at Cisonde village near Chinsali on June 1st, 1931. Chinsali is a Government station. It consisted at the time of two European officials' houses,

[1] H. Cory has collected many hundreds of these figurines from Tanganyika tribes. His book, shortly to be published, gives an account of their distribution, together with a number of illustrations. See also his 'Figurines used in the initiation ceremonies of the Nguu of Tanganyika', *Africa*, vol. XIV, No. 8, 1944. The Venda, Lovedu, and Vandau of Portuguese East Africa also use figurines. Schofield considers the Bemba figures similar to the pottery images found at Zimbabwe, cf. 'Pottery images or mbusa used at the chisungu of the Bemba people of North-Eastern Rhodesia', *South African Journal of Science*, vol. XLI, Feb. 1945.

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Nangoshye has modelled the crocodile ready for firing
(See pp. 102, 203)

[facing p. 64]

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The Ceremony

At about twelve o'clock, ten to fifteen women went out into the bush round the village and started to make pottery emblems from clay which had been piled there by the younger helpers. It seemed to be a compulsory task as one of the women who was kept away sent a bracelet as a fine. Nangoshye gave instructions to each woman and allotted them their work, but it was clear that they were all experienced potters. She herself modelled the most important figures using pieces of bark as stands for her work. (She is seen modelling the crocodile p. 64.) The women gossiped but they worked quickly with marked concentration. The atmosphere was that of a sewing bee or Women's Institute meeting in this country, although the women occasionally broke out into rather racy jokes about the fertility emblems (see p. 211). There was no sacred tone about the occasion at all although Nangoshye was decidedly severe in manner, and once told the party they ought not to laugh while making the *mbusa*. A passing man was driven away with mock abuse.

At about two or three, the mother of one of the girls brought food. The women fell on it with their hands covered in clay. It was evidently a snack, a reward, and not a full meal. Later, a dish was sent by the mother of the second girl and was sent back with a peremptory demand for more. Such a small dish showed no respect to the ceremony, Nangoshye declared.

The fourth, fifth and sixth days passed quietly, with further work on the pottery emblems in the morning and more dancing in the hut in the evening. The *banacisungu* were remarkable for their absence. They once appeared with their cloths folded in the ordinary way, but were immediately shouted at. 'Pull down your cloths, you! Good heavens! Are you walking about just like us people of quality? Are you trying to hide your breasts as we do?'[1]

Nangoshye complained constantly that she did not get enough food. It was her pride that was hurt. It was true that people called her to eat with them, she admitted, but they called her from pity only. There was no formal presentation of food, no 'respect'.

[1] Women wear their cloths round their waists when working but above their breasts when at leisure. Princesses always wear them in the latter way.

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881 has given you.' The ceremonial from this moment begins to represent the handing over or giving of secrets to the girl, and it emphasizes her kinsmen's and husband's obligations to help her.

NINTH DAY

Modelling the large pottery emblems

881 The next morning's work began at about eleven o'clock. Great
532 piles of clay had been collected outside the hut and Nangoshye and a few helpers set to work to model what looked like an enormous snake coiled to cover the whole of the hut floor. When it was finished, legs were added round the outer coil. The whole was decorated with white, red and black earth and stuck all over with marrow, castor-oil and bean seeds set carefully about two inches apart. The work was very heavy. The group of women slapped and smoothed the clay with the utmost concentration until about five in the evening, none of them pausing for a regular meal. The task seemed to me endless. As the evening wore on, I suggested sticking the marrow seeds further apart to get the work done quicker. The idea was evidently a shocking one. Nangoshye was indignant. 'Ala! Mother! We couldn't do a thing like that. We must do everything with elegance (*busaka*). We must do it as we always do it.' Here was evidently a part of the ceremony that could not be skimped.

The interpretations of this emblem were curious. The women were reluctant to talk about it. Nangoshye first called it rays of the sun (*amashindo eya itengo*) and said it was to teach the girl that the sun was high and she must get on with her work. Later,
[831] she admitted it was also a snake. It was manhood (*bwaume*).

The brother and sister

881 Meanwhile, some of the younger women had been modelling
532 two small figures of a naked man and woman standing flat against
593 the wall about two feet high. The man's arms were flung out wide, one hand on the shoulder of the woman who had her other hand folded across her face. The figures were described as 'the brother and sister'. They were the subject of eager delight throughout the day. Visitors kept pointing them out to me with evident pleasure. 'Look, the girl is crying because her father has died, but now the

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brother is looking after her.' 'There is the brother. He says, "Hush! don't cry! Follow me. I am going to look after you now." ' 'Yes, she must honour her brother now because her father is dead.' Over and over again details of the figures were criticized and admired. Most Bemba delight in describing the brother-sister relationship which is such a pivot of the matrilineal system. They refer to it in proverb and folk-tale, and adopt a specially sentimental tone in speaking of it in daily life. Most of the chisungu ritual stresses the husband's duty to feed and clothe his wife, but here the women seem to emphasize the brother's perpetual obligation to look after his sister before, during and after her marriage. Some obscene jokes made about the navel of the woman's figure made me wonder whether there was also some representation of brother-sister incest, but the navel itself is considered an amusing and obscene part of the body by the Bemba, so that I do not know if I am right.

The bed

A third model standing against the wall consisted of three hollow squares of clay. It was known as the bed or the 'blankets'. This model did not seem to attract much attention, although women began to sing a song about a great *nacimbusa* wearing a plumed head-dress. (No. 23)

(One woman said the model represented the girl's bed. Another that it was to teach the girl that even if her husband gave her no blankets or clothing yet she was to stay with him. Whatever he did she was just to look on (*ukutamba*) and not to speak of it to her friends. In the old days, she added, a girl could not get a divorce from a man who did not provide for her. If she went to complain, her grandmother would merely say, 'Well, you must sit naked, then. Stay with the fool you are with'. (*cipuba cobe.*))

Magic of attraction

After this hard day's work, I was surprised to find that the whole design was suddenly pulled to pieces two hours after it was finished and when it had only just been shown to the *banaciswngu*. Every marrow seed was taken out carefully and whitened in sorghum flour for use the following day. The clay was stacked up outside the hut. Nangoshye remained behind to stick some magic leaves in the roof of the hut. 'It is magic (*bwanga*). We put it there

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was applauded. The other girl was throughout more stocky and reserved. A woman said to me: 'Well, we can't give her up! We must go on and on trying to teach her.'

881 X 535

TWELFTH DAY

This was a blank day. Nangoshye declared herself insulted and went off to reap her own fields. She had plenty to eat, as was clear to anyone sitting in a tent near her hut; but the relatives did not bring her enough 'dishes of respect'. 'They neglect me,' she went off grumbling.[1]

881 X 576

In the evening the pottery emblems were piled with branches, scattered with leaves of the magic *mufungu* tree, and fired.

881 X 778

THIRTEENTH DAY

This was another quiet day. In the morning, Nangoshye and her helpers went to inspect the pile of pottery emblems still covered with smouldering ashes.

The snake

In the afternoon a new pottery figure was made in the hut. It was an immense snake (*yongolo*). The clay was smoothed into coils that circled round the floor of the hut with a tail on the fire-stands against one wall and a head rearing up the opposite wall. Again the work was heavy and lasted two or three hours. There was the puddling of the clay outside the hut, the fetching of gourd and bean seeds and the meticulous arrangement of seeds along every coil of the snake's body. There was the same concentrated air about the women and the sense of a fight against time, but the same unwillingness to shorten the work at all.

881 X 532

(The women were reluctant to speak of the meaning of this emblem. 'It's just a snake' several said impatiently. Another added, 'It is to teach her not to deceive her husband.' On question, Nangoshye looked down with great embarrassment and said, 'Yes, it is a sign of manhood.'[2]

[831]

[1] "*Bansula*". *Ukusula* is to despise, neglect, or fail to acknowledge a person's rights.

[2] *Subsequent Bemba interpretation.* P. B. M. commented afterwards that it was not an ordinary snake. It was a *yongolo*, a very rare snake. It was to teach the girl that unexpected things might happen. She must support them all patiently.

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The Ceremony

The fool

881 Near the door of the hutt two of the younger helpers modelled
532 another human figure. It was a squat, round female form, highly
522 stylized. It was at once recognized by visitors with shrieks of laughter as the fool (*cipuba*). This is a word that is difficult to translate. It means a person who is either naturally stupid, or else just obtuse, unconscious of the niceties of civilized life, and either unaware of her social obligations or just too lazy to bother to carry them out. In this context, I was told 'The *cipuba*? She is a woman who just sits about.' The speaker imitated someone sitting limp and collapsed on the floor. 'She just refuses to do what is asked of her—all kinds of work. She just says "No" to her husband. She refuses food to visitors. She doesn't fetch water or keep the house nice! This is what she looks like.' There followed another imitation of a woman sitting huddled up with rounded shoulders and head bent down. All this information was volunteered eagerly amid much amused comment on the figure itself. One of the *banacimbusa* said to me in an undertone, 'Besides it is a woman who doesn't understand how to do things. She hasn't been taught. She would let a man see the menstrual blood.' Her voice changed to one of real horror and disgust. 'She just doesn't bother about anything.' The figure represented both the uninitiated woman who has not been taught the patterns of female conduct, and the lazy wife who has forgotten the lessons she has learnt.

881 At about seven o'clock, the models were again completely destroyed and the clay put back outside the hut for further use next day.

FOURTEENTH DAY

The whitening magic (ukuuya ku mpemba)

When the mid-day meal was over the drums began to beat and the village women gathered outside the chisungu hut. We went in straggling procession down to the river and stood by the soft black mud that lined the banks. Nangoshye took a mouthful of the dirty water and sprayed it in the air. Everyone clapped and ululated.

(The rite seemed significant in the sense that the performers

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The Ceremony

SIXTEENTH DAY

[88] This was a quiet day. The older women were away all morning collecting millet and flour for subsequent festivities in the neighbouring villages. In the afternoon, the fired pottery images were decorated with red, black and white and some of those kept permanently hidden away for use at chisungu ceremonies were brought out for re-painting. Dancing went on in the hut all night. The shelter and the screen had already been removed.

SEVENTEENTH DAY

The second woodland ceremony

[88] *Bringing the girls out of doors* (*ukubafumya panse*). The day opened with a good deal of discussion and coming and going. I was told this was the day for bringing the girls out of doors, and I definitely had the impression that a new and important stage in the proceedings had been reached. We were to go out into the bush to a *mwenge* tree,[1] and there was a hot altercation among the older women as to which tree would be most suitable. The rest of the company gathered at the initiation hut, the two candidates looking for once quite cheerful with their clothes tucked above their breasts as Bemba women usually wear them. Their serenity was, however, short-lived, for Nangoshye immediately spotted them on joining the group. 'Pull your clothes off your breasts,' she shouted imperiously. 'Who do you think you are? People of status?'

The women seemed to be tired and there was quarrelling over the *mbusa* to be carried into the bush—an enamel bowl with the domestic emblems, salt, tobacco, white chalk, red dye and beads; a winnowing basket full of ground-nuts; and two of the pottery emblems which resemble a pot and its cover but are known as the garden mound (*mputa*) and the garden (*amabala*) (Cf. p. 96). A small gourd of beer was also carried by one of the younger girls who kept eating the sludge on its side with one finger although constantly rebuked for doing so. We made one or two false starts owing to someone having forgotten axes or hoes which were to be needed. In fact, I had the general impression that morale was low.

[1] One of the female trees.

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881 supreme effort and cleared the jump. The relief of the crowd was tremendous. Ululation broke out. Both girls were lifted on their mothers' backs with cries of triumph. The *nacimbusa* had to crawl under the hoop and the girls themselves were pushed under the hoop, first in one direction and then in the other. One of the girls' mothers gave a bracelet to hang on the *mupeto*, and then the two candidates uprooted the whole structure and carried it off to the river and threw it in. The scene was very animated. There was a hot discussion as to who should carry the girls, the maternal grandmother or the paternal. When this was settled the candidates were finally carried into the village.

(The jumping of the *mupeto* was described as a rite to make the girls grow (*ukubakushya*).)

The making of the lion

The helpers got no rest, but went immediately to the initiation hut where they started more potting work. The drums were going all the time, but everyone was tired. One young girl escaped to try and eat something, but was rebuked as being very insubordinate. Some of the older people managed to slip away.

The women worked hard at making a lion out of the log of [532] *kabumba* which had been brought in from the bush. It was set up on four forked sticks and a most life-like head was then modelled in clay at one end, with the mouth reddened with *nkula*, and teeth made of pumpkin seeds. The clay head was then covered with grass arranged to look like hair, and the feet studded with beans. The whole effect was most impressive. It was by far the most realistic image that had been made.

Then the roof of the shelter made the previous day was used to make a new shelter against the wall, and again new beans were stuck up the supports of the shelter. The work went on at the utmost speed until about five o'clock when most of the women melted away and the *nacimbusa* was left by herself to repaint all the small pottery emblems for the final rite.

THE RITES OF THE LAST NIGHT

The blind bridegroom

We were called to the initiation hut at about eight o'clock in

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the pottery helmet known as the 'plumed head-dress' (*ngala*) on her head. A piece of bark-cloth was wrapped round her waist. The severe and rather domineering woman stood tense and excited at the doorway of the hut. Her great moment had come. She sang:

'*The skin of the lion is worn*
At the court of Mwamba.' (No. 32)

(The messenger of *Mwamba* (*musolo*) used to be clothed in lion skin in the old days. The *nacimbusa* is honoured as the messenger of a great chief. She is dressed in bark-cloth since this was the payment made to a *nacimbusa* at the end of a chisungu ceremony in the old days.)

The presentation of the mbusa. The pottery models were then pulled forward and the long rite of the giving of the *mbusa* began.

Each model has its associated song and the meanings of these songs are given in Appendix B. Each song was sung first by Nangoshye, then by some of the older women in turn, and then by each of the two girls. Each had its appropriate action to accompany the words. Some *mbusa* were merely offered ceremonially to different individuals present; others were handled with mimes suited to the associated song.

On the night in question forty-three different *mbusa* were presented to the girls. I have given interpretations for thirty in Appendix B and drawings of eighteen are given there. Here I try to group them somewhat arbitrarily under different headings. As each emblem may have several meanings this grouping is inevitably rather an artificial one.

A. DOMESTIC DUTIES

The mortar (Song 52, Fig. 15). The company mimed the stamping of grain and the song stressed the woman's duty to provide and prepare food.

The water-pot (Song 62). The imitation water-pot was put on the head of each girl in turn to the accompaniment of a song emphasizing the duty of the wife to get water for her husband.

The hearth-stone (Song 62). This was a conical-shaped model representing one of the pieces of ant-hill used to make the Bemba

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881 fire-stands. The girl stood on the model and pretended to put a pot
532 on the fire.

The pipe (Song 59). This was a rough imitation of a white man's pipe. It was used to teach the girl not to idle, smoking, all day.

B. AGRICULTURAL DUTIES

The garden mound (Song 44, Fig. 7). This model represents one of the women's gardening mounds. The song refers to industry in gardening and also, by a double meaning, to the husband's rights
[831] over his wife—the woman is a cultivated garden through which another man must not pass without trespassing.

The garden (Song 45, Fig. 8). This model, a helmet-like bowl, was handed to and fro by the actors during a song which urged the girl to put her energies into gardening and to take care to preserve the seeds so that she did not use up all the food in time of famine. This *mbusa* was also used in one of the woodland rites (see p. 95).

The hoe (Song 47, Fig. 10). Nangoshye took an imitation hoe, about 8 inches long, and pretended to hoe the ground and this the two girls did in turn after her, the other women miming the gesture of hoeing with their arms. The accompanying song urges the girl
[831] to cultivate her garden and, by a double meaning, likens the husband to a hoe which will open up the girl, who is thus compared to the garden.

C. OBLIGATIONS OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

The bracelet (Song 38, Fig. 1). This is a large clay bracelet, daubed with whitewash, which was put on each of the girls' arms in turn. It represents the *nsalamu* or initial instalment of the marriage payment and it stresses the husband's duty to provide clothes and other things for his wife.

The bead necklet (Song 39, Fig. 2). In some ceremonies this is a mushroom-shaped object representing the conus shell from which the triangular beads (*mpande*) worn by Bemba women are cut; in the ceremony that I witnessed the model was of the triangular bead itself, threaded with string and hung round the girl's neck or swung in one of the actors' hands. The song stated that 'My mpande bead has fallen in the chief's court' and referred to the

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fact that a wife, if ill-treated, would run back to her family. The husband would have to beg her back with as much humility as he would have to observe if he had dropped something precious in a chief's court.

The crocodile (Song 45). This was a realistic model of a crocodile with spines on its back and whitewash daubed all over. It was handed to and fro amongst the women. The reference was to the husband who is regarded as the crocodile which provides everything as does the chief. The crocodile lives in reeds which represent the secrecy guarding the house secrets. The husband may also behave like a crocodile and lie in wait for his wife if she deceives him.

The man who is a fool (Song 55). This was an inverted bowl put on the head of the actors like a helmet. The man is a fool if he doesn't look after and clothe his wife.

Cilume ca ciboa (Song 56, Fig. 18). This was a figure of a man with a large head and phallus and no arms. It represents the man who stays in the house all day finding fault with his wife and doing no work.

The young man walking smartly (Song 55*b*). This was a figure of a jaunty young man in European clothes with a hat on. He is the man who dresses himself up and does no work; or the man who goes to look for hoes for his marriage payment.

Ciboni musuma (Song 65). This is a conical-shaped model covered with small projections. It is said to represent a tree, and it is also the name of a beautiful head-wife of a legendary chief. The husband is to look upon his wife as the most beautiful of all women just as the chief preferred his head-wife to all others.

Sonsa nkalamo (Song 60). This is another conical-shaped model with small projections on it. The song tells the girl not to tell tales or to spread rumours or to gossip about her husband.

The porcupine (Song 49, Fig. 12). The porcupine model is a small round ball of clay stuck with spines and threaded on string. It is hung round the girl's neck and she is made to sway to and fro to the music so that the spines prick her breasts. This is said to be a punishment for her misdeeds before she reached the initiation ceremony. The song tells her that wrongs are never hidden but will come to light and be punished.

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The Ceremony

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The star (Song 46, Fig. 3). This is a large round pot with a narrow mouth. It is perforated all over with small holes. A lighted taper is put inside to represent the starlight. The song urges the girl to show forgiveness even if her husband abuses her obscenely.

The husband with the plumes (Song 42, Fig. 5). This is a pine-apple-shaped vase with an irregular hole at the apex about eight inches high. It is covered with small projections and painted half white and half red. This is put on the *nacimbusa's* head. The company sings of the honour due to the husband who comes with plumed head-dress like the warrior or chief of old days. While she still wears this head-dress, the initiate takes the little spoon (Fig. 4) and pretends to pour water over the husband's hands with it and rubs the floor beneath with the other hand. This is a further representation of the wife's duty to wash her husband's hands with the water out of the ceremonial pot after intercourse (see p. 31).

D. OBLIGATIONS TO OTHER RELATIVES

The clan (Song 46, Fig. 9). This is a small basket with a handle. It is swung to and fro in the hand while the *mbusa* called the 'husband with the plumes' is worn on the head. The model illustrates the girl's duty to her relatives by marriage. She carries her marriage on her head, i.e. in the superior position: her clan is dangling in her head.

E. MOTHERHOOD

Coshi wa yoma (Song 53, Fig. 16). This is a figure about eight inches high representing a woman suckling two babies and carrying two on her back. The song describes the woman who weaned her child too soon so that it died.

Mwanakashi (Song 54, Fig. 17). This is a figure of a pregnant woman. The associated song says her days have come to give birth.

The house (Song 51, Fig. 14). This is a small model house with a tiny door made separately of sticks and clay. This is moved in and out by the singers. The child cries because the mother has gone out to a beer-drink and left it alone.

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The Ceremony

The centipede (Song 64). This is a form of centipede like an enormous caterpillar which appears with the rains, with a black back and yellow legs. The model is coloured white. The song tells the girl that she must not have intercourse too often or she will produce twins which will die: multiple births like the many legs of the centipede. Or according to another account, she is warned to do purification after twins.

G. GENERAL ETHICS

The hyena (Song 64). A realistic figure with spines down its back. The girl is not to steal like the hyena.

The tortoise (Song 50, Fig. 13). For this model Nangoshye and her fellow *banacimbusa* squatted on their toes and jogged up and down to the music, pushing their heads alternately out and in with a curious change of expression from the eager and questing to the blank and uninterested as they sang:

> '*The tortoise when it is at home puts in its head*
> *Into its shell.*

The girl is not to be like a woman who, when she goes out visiting, peers into every basket and pot saying, 'Friend, what is here? Give me a taste of this. Let me share that.' Whereas when the friends come to visit her, she sits with lowered head and tries to divert attention from the food in her own house.

H. THE CHISUNGU CEREMONY

Some models refer to the rite itself.

The cardinal bird (Song 63) is a small bird painted white, with spots of red on its wings. The *kabangula* has a red crest and hence resembles the *nacimbusa* of old days who had a red feathered headdress.

The egret (Song 48, Fig. 11). A bird on a twig. The song refers to the whitening and beautifying of the girl (see pp. 88–9).

The lion (Song 56, see p. 129). This is a large pot closed on top and with two open arms—it is called the lion because a noise resembling the roar of a lion can be made by blowing down one arm and blocking the other. The lion symbolism has been described before.

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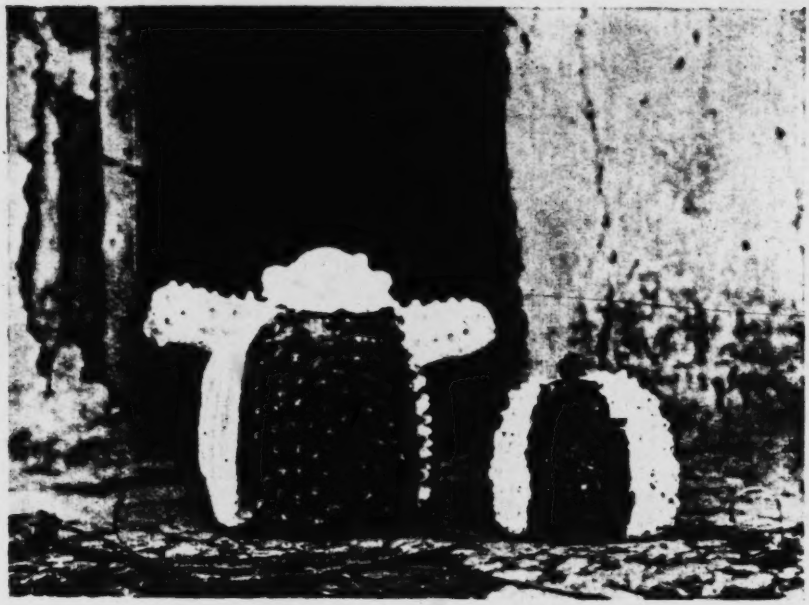
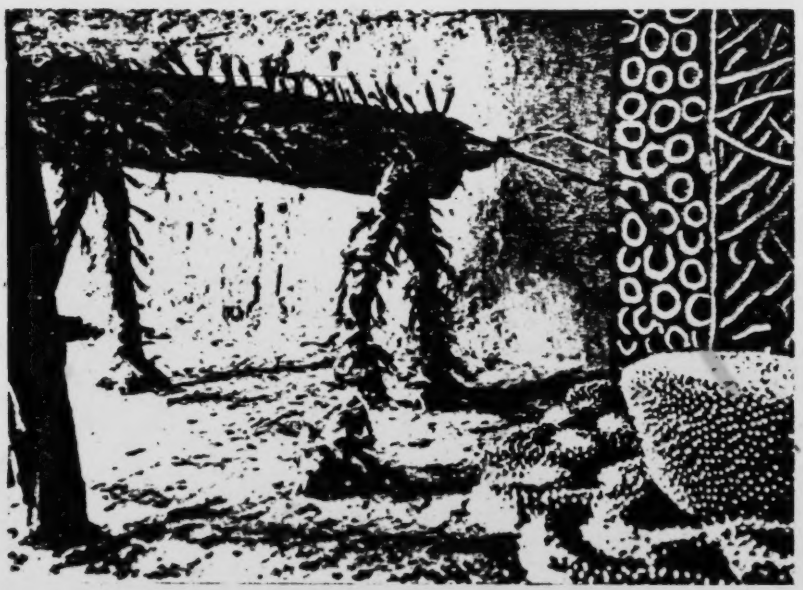


The lion model down which the girls blow to make a roaring sound, together with the helmet (*Mulume wa ngala*. Song 42)
(See pp. 104, 105, 106)



The model of the lion together with the snake model
(See pp. 87, 98)
[facing p. 161]

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Songs Sung During the Ceremony

881X 533

Ualele cisungu,	You have slept with the chisungu child, [539]
Ualele nkalamo.	You have slept with the lion.

Interpretation. It is dangerous to sleep with a girl after puberty. It is like the danger of the lion. The young man is warned not to sleep with his bride without the right precautions.

II

The songs that follow are those which are sung when the girl is 881X presented with her pottery figurines.[1] The majority of the songs 533 are given here, but omissions have been made when the meaning of 778 the song is very obscure.

[532]

Fig. 1. *The bracelet*

No. 38. *The bracelet* (*likosa*) Fig. 1. This is a model of a bracelet. It is put over the wrist of the girl, or else swung in her hand. The following words are sung:

Kampele mulume,	It was given me by my husband, [539]
Akakayanda.	The little house.
Mayo tambene!	Mother look at it!

Interpretation. It is the husband's duty to clothe his wife and the bracelet represents this obligation. The betrothal present (*nsalamo*) is also usually a bracelet. The initiate is ritually clothed [584] with bracelets made of grass at the end of the chisungu when she is ceremonially bathed in the river (p. 109). Hence the girl calls her mother to look at what her husband has given her, i.e. the bracelet,

[1] The collection I made for the museums of the Universities of Johannesburg and Cape Town differ slightly from that seen at Cisonde village. The former have been described by Schofield. Op. cit.

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881 533 778 and thus she hints that the time has come for her to be given to her husband. The song can apparently also be translated as 'Go and give me to my husband'.

[532]

Fig. 2. The necklet beads (2 forms—one representing the whole conus shell and one the triangular discs made from it to be used as beads of a necklace).

[301] *No. 39. The necklet bead* (*mpande*) (Fig. 2). Two forms are used in the chisungu ceremonies—the whole conus shell as shown in the drawing or a triangular section such as the Bemba regularly wear as neck ornaments. There are many historical associations with such shells. They are, for instance, placed on the body of the dead paramount chief when he is buried.

In the chisungu the model of the bead, strung on bark string, was swung to and fro by the mistress of the ceremony while the company sang:

[539]

Mpande yandi,	My mpande bead,
Yapona kwi sano.	It has fallen in the chief's court.

Interpretation. There was considerable unanimity in explanation here. Informants all agreed that the *mpande* represented the wife. If the husband has wronged his wife so that she runs back to her own family, then he has lost his head. To get his wife back he must approach his relatives-in-law with great circumspection and must bring presents as he would if he had let something fall in a chief's courtyard. This is a typical example of the allusive use of a couple of doggerel lines to refer to a marriage obligation. The *mpande* shell is also used as a vagina symbol in some parts of Africa. This meaning was not specifically mentioned to me by Bemba informants.

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Songs Sung During the Ceremony

No. 40. *The star* (*ntanda*) (Fig. 3). This is a big pot with a narrow mouth and perforated sides. A lighted taper is put inside so

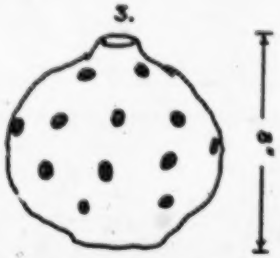

Fig. 3. *The Star* (*with perforations so that a lighted taper will burn inside*).

that it shines out to represent star-light. A pottery lid is then fitted on top and the initiated girl must balance it on her head, if possible with the torch remaining alight inside. The company sings:

Ulekashye ntanda bushiku;	You gaze at the stars at night;
Ulantuka ukashika.	You revile me obscenely.

Interpretation. Here there seems to be a complicated double meaning, and probably more than two. Women answered questions about this figurine with shame and hesitation. They said that the light which shone through was the blood inside the woman, which it is so terrible to display. *Ukashika* is to be grave, weighty but also to become red. The most horrible curse a man can use is to swear by the menstruation of his wife. It is a thing which a woman can hardly bring herself to whisper in explanation. The surface meaning is, however, given cheerfully. However badly a husband swears at his wife, she must not answer back. This is a typical example of words with a readily repeatable meaning and concealed associations known as 'things underneath' (*fintu fya panshi*).

No. 41. *The little spoon* (*kakombo*) (Fig. 4). The initiate stands opposite the 'bridegroom' on the last night of the ceremony.[1] She pretends to pour water on 'his' hands with the model of the spoon

[1] Represented by his sister.

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Appendix B

881 and to rub the floor beneath as though she were muddying it over.
533 All sing:

[539]	*Cibale! Cibale!*	Cibale! Cibale!
	Kasambe mulume,	Go and wash your husband,
	We cinangwa!	You ignorant (uninitiated) creature!
	Na panshi ulala (*or utota*),	And to the ground make obeisance,
	We cinangwa!	You ignorant creature!
	Cibale! Cibale!	Cibale! Cibale!

[532]

Fig. 4. The Spoon.

Interpretation. Here the meaning was clear and the actions representative. The girl here imitates in song her part in the ceremony of purification after intercourse. She takes water from her little marriage pot and pours it on her husband's hands. The initiated girl knows how important it is to do this but not the girl who is a weed, or an uncultivated plant, because she has not been danced. Cibale is a legendary figure.

[532]

Fig. 5. The man with the plumed head dress worn on the 'bridegroom's' head.

No. 42. The man with the plumed head-dress (*waume wa ngala*) (Fig. 5). This helmet-like model was worn by the female represen-

3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
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tative of the bridegroom, who balanced it on her head while the girl was washing her hands as above. They sing:

Mwansa Cembe!	Mwansa Cembe! (twice)
Mwansa Cembe!	
Mulume wa ngala waisa.	The husband with the plumed head-dress has come.

Interpretation. Mwansa Cembe is a legendary figure in whom no one seemed to show much interest. The song itself was sung with great excitement (see p. 86). The husband comes wearing the plumed head-dress which was given by the chief to brave warriors. He comes in triumph. The girl kneels to him. 'It is to show honour to the husband. The girl must praise him.'

Fig. 6. The crocodile (the tail was here broken off in firing).

No. 48. The crocodile (*yweno*) (Fig. 6). The girl holds the crocodile figurine in her hand and the company sing:

Luyamba,	Crocodile,
Uikata ku matete.	You have caught in the rushes.
Nani shyaleka ku matete?	Who has been left in the rushes?
Luyamba.	Crocodile!

Interpretation. The crocodile, for which *luyamba* is an archaic term, is the emblem of the royal clan. There seem to be varied, or else obscure, meanings attached to this *mbusa*. One woman said it was given the girl 'to honour the chief'; another that it was to teach her not to dally by the river at night. An educated man said that the song meant that the husband is a member of the royal crocodile clan, i.e. a chief, since he provides everything for the home and is the protector. The rushes are the offences which a woman may commit by breaking the marriage vow on revealing

3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
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the secrets of the home. The young woman must look out for the husband who may be waiting like a crocodile to seize her.

No. 44. *The garden mound* (*mputa*) (Fig. 7. See also p. 97). This figurine was balanced on the girl's head while the company sang:

Mwibala,	Through the garden,
Teti mupite muntu,	No man must pass,
Nga apita ni muka mwaume.	If it is the wife of the man who has passed.

Interpretation. Here again, we have multiple meanings and, to the European at least, great obscurity. The model is a representation of the round garden mounds which it is specifically the woman's duty to cultivate. One informant said glibly, 'No one

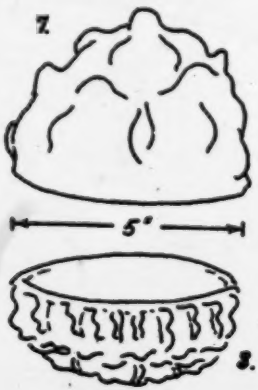

Fig. 7. *The garden mound.*
Fig. 8. *The garden.*
Both used in the second woodland ceremony.

must take a woman's garden.' But the *mputa* represents a cultivated and owned place, e.g. a chief's garden in which it is tabooed to have sex intercourse. 'The married woman is like a garden through which a man should not pass when he knows the girl is someone else's wife. If others respect his wife, he should do the same to theirs.'

No. 45. *The gardens* (*Amabala*) (Fig. 8. See also p. 96). This is one of the *mbusa* carried out into the bush for one of the cere-

3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
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monies (p. 92). The women dance round it after a rite centring round the offering of the different seeds of the tribe to the elders in order of rank.

Interpretation. I have no song and no satisfactory interpretation. Women said the *mbusa* was shown to the girl to teach her to garden.

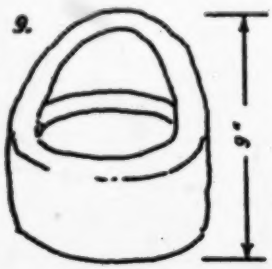

Fig. 9. The Clan. (The basket which is swung in a girl's hand, while the man's family is the crown worn on her head.)

No. 46. The clan (mukoa) (Fig. 9). This is a model of a basket with a handle. The girl swings it by one hand while she balances on her head a pot shaped like a helmet, as shown in Fig. 5. The company sing:

Cupo asenda pa mutwe;	She carries her marriage on her head;
Uaseshya mukoa.	Her clan is dangling in her hand.

Interpretation. There seemed to be no difficulty about this *mbusa*. Informants told me at once that since the girl was married she had to put her in-laws in a place of honour above the members of her clan, i.e. on her head; the clan relatives must be swung below in the girl's hand.

No. 47. The hoe (lukasu) (Fig. 10). The girls pretend to be hoeing a garden. They sing:

Nimpa kalonde.	Give me my little hoe (archaic).
Ndea ku mabala.	I go to the gardens.
Kabala kalala.	The little gardens of the ground-nuts.

or

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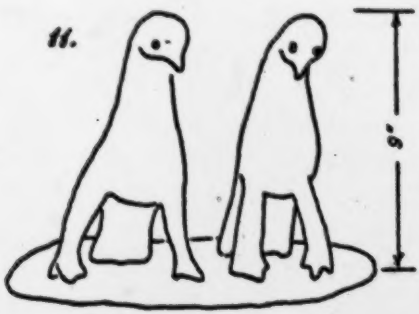
Nimpa kalonde.	Give me my little hoe,
Nsebaule kongwe.	So that I can make ready the hymen.
Mulume wamona.	You have seen your husband.

Fig. 10. *The Hoe.*

Interpretation. Here is a good example of different layers of meaning. First the initiate is to work hard at hoeing. Another rational explanation was that the girl was to be taught how to hoe when pregnant without hurting herself. Then a woman said, with a gesture and a wink, the girl would be hoed up by her husband as the ground is. The second of the two rhymes has a frankly sexual meaning—the girl wants to be given to her husband.



No. 11. *The egret* (*nkoba*) (*the white bird associated with the magic of whitening or cleansing*).

No. 48. *The egret* (*nkoba*) (Fig. 11). The company sings:

We kakoba! We koni!	You little egret! You bird!
Shimwalaba mpemba.	Do not forget the whitewash.
or	
Nkoba yandi yapwa,	My digging stick is finished;
Yalobela mwibala.	It is lost in the garden.

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Interpretation. There is a play on words here. *Nkoba* is the white bird to which the girl is likened during the ceremony of the whitening magic. The *nkoba* is also a small digging stick used as a rake.

Fig. 12. *The porcupine (worn round the girl's neck to prick her if she did wrong before her initiation).*

No. 49. *The porcupine* (*chinungi*) (Fig. 12). This is a small rod of clay stuck with spines and threaded with string. It is put round the neck of the girl like a necklace and she has to swing it to and fro so that the spines prick her on the breast and neck. They sing.

Cinungi posa matamba,	Porcupine throw the waves (spines)
Kulya twalilwa na mubemba.	We are benighted by the lake.

Interpretation. It was supposed that the girl who had deceived her bridegroom was hurt by the spines, and that this showed her what her husband would do to her when she was married. Nkonde comments: 'Wrongs are never hidden. They come to light one day.'

Fig. 13. *The tortoise.*

No. 50. *The tortoise* (*fulwe*) (Fig. 13). The women jog up and down and mime a tortoise putting its head in and out. They sing:

Fulwe pa fyakwe,	The tortoise when it is at home,
Aingishya mukoshi;	Puts in its head;
Mu cifwambaka.	Into its shell.

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Interpretation. You know the kind of woman who is reticent about food in her own house for fear she may have to distribute it; that is to say she puts her head under her shell. But when she is in other people's houses she puts out her head and looks into this pot and that so that she may get offered food. The girl must be hospitable.

[532]

Fig. 14. *The house (used with a miniature door of reeds which pulls in and out).*

No. 51. *The house* (*yanda*) (Fig. 14). This is an ingenious model. It has a loose door made of reeds which pulls in and out on a string while the accompanying song is sung:

[539]

Mwana alelila,	The child is crying,
Nshisalile uko alele,	I did not see where it lay.
Tandabula.	The door is swinging.

Interpretation. This song seemed to point an important moral. Women told me impressively that it was to teach the girl how to look after her baby. The child referred to in the song is crying because the door is left swinging, i.e. it is open because the mother has gone to a beer-drink and left her baby alone. (*Kutandabula* also means to chatter.)

No. 52. *The mortar* (*kabende*) (Fig. 15). The initiate is given a pestle and made to imitate the pounding of grain and to sing:

[539]

Kabende kandi,	My little mortar,
Kamekelo.	I will show it off.

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[532]

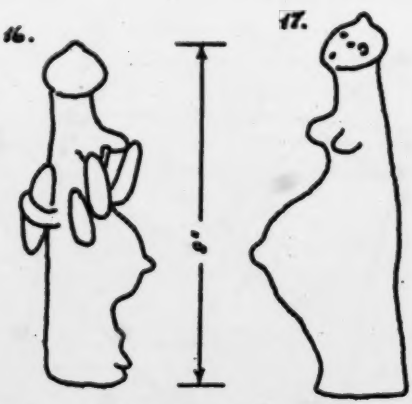
Fig. 15. *The mortar.*

Interpretation. The woman is to pound grain quickly for her husband and not slowly as she did when she was a girl.

No. 53. *The nursing mother* (*Coshi wa yoma*) (Fig. 16). The mother is pregnant and is shown carrying four babies at the same time, one at her breast and three at her back. This model was thought exceedingly funny by the Cisonde women. They sang:

Mayo alembepa!	My mother deceived me!
Coshi wa yoma!	Coshi ua yoma!
Kanshi uambepafye;	So you just deceived me;
Naimita umusuku.	I have become pregnant again.

[539]



[532]

Fig. 16. *The nursing mother* (*Coshi wa yoma*).
Fig. 17. *The pregnant woman.*

Interpretation. Coshi wa yoma was a midwife of legendary fame and is merely addressed in this song. The girl complains because her mother told her to wean her first child too soon so that it died;

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No. 57. The man without arms. Cilume ca ciboa (Fig. 18). This is the man with an enormous male organ but no arms. He lazes about the house finding fault with his wife, but he does not do any work or sit with his fellows making nets or baskets in the men's shelter. The husband who 'just sits' seems to be comparable to the *cipuba*, the girl who takes no pride in her domestic duties and knows nothing (p. 88).

*No.*18. *The lazy man who has no arms to work.*

No. 58. *The lion* (*mundu*) (See pp. 106, 129). This is the largest and most elaborate of the *mbusa*. One of the projections at the side is hollow so that a roaring noise is made by blowing down it. It is used on the last day of the ceremony to imitate the roaring of the lion which is likened to the husband.

No. 59. *The pipe* (*pipee*). The women pretend to smoke like Europeans do.

The girl is told she is not to smoke all day and to neglect her duties.

No. 60. *Sonsa nkalamo.* This is a model like a tree with clay projections on it. The song tells the woman to run in answer to a summons or to be obedient to her husband, according to men informants. Women, on the other hand, say that it tells the husband to honour the wife!

No. 61. *The hearthstones* (*amafwasa*). The girl stands on this initiation hearthstone and pretends to balance a pot on it.

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rattle who ran in front of it, and by whom the *Fingan* made appearance of being baffled. The performance was witnessed by a circle of women and a few men. When the moon gave evidence of rising the figures disappeared.

The following morning the girl was again brought to the *bwalo* about 11 a.m. and seated on a mat between her "friend" and her mother, while the women danced to the time of seven drums. Her head was anointed with water and shaved, the process was started by a woman and then finished by a man, apparently the village barber; the left side of the head was shaved first. The mother was shaved by a woman at the same time.

While this was going on, presents were being made—maize, beads, a chicken, tobacco, bracelets, etc. When the shaving was finished several women came and spoke to the girl, after which she was taken away for the bathing in the lake close at hand, returning about 1 p.m. in new blue calico from waist to knees with white sash, the body well oiled all over, to the time of one small drum played by an old man; then, supported on either side by two "friends," she waited a few moments while several women did a few shuffling steps, she then advanced alone and did a few steps. She then made a present of a chicken and tobacco to the drummer, and then to her father, kneeling to each. Again she danced alone, running to and fro

FIG. 2.

and spinning round quickly. During this time two masks, the *Sanchuna* and *Nkolola* (Fig. 2), appeared and mixed with crowd, danced about and made funny remarks; they went up to the girl and performed a kind of *danse-du-ventre*.

After thus dancing in the village she goes round to the houses of all her relatives, beginning at her father's house, and repeats the dance together with addition of a little *danse-du-ventre*, the masks (*Sanchuna* and *Nkolola*) go round with her, her immediate attendant being always her "friend." This night and the next day she spends in the house with her friend, the evening of the next day she goes to a separate house arranged for, and has to have coitus with a man who is asked to oblige; on emission taking place he has to withdraw in time, and the semen is collected on a cloth which has to be seen by the women. The following night she goes to the house of her betrothed to live with him; she has probably been betrothed since she was an infant.

About the *Sanchuna* and *Nkolola* I could learn nothing. These men wore masks with calico covering the back of the head and neck, a kilt made of strips of leopard skin and grass bound round their arms and legs.

pants from the contemplation of their loss he makes jokes at the expense of the dead man and behaves in a fashion which in other circumstances would be considered outrageous and would not be tolerated.

Kazembes considered themselves as potentially immortal; thus the death of a Kazembe was attributed to neglect of magical precautions against witchcraft.(1) According to Pinto, slaves and wives of a dead Kazembe were sacrificed and a ten-day period of authorized licence followed during which robberies were allowed.(2)

It was believed that the living and the dead could communicate. Life after death resembled that led while alive.(3)

RELIGIOUS AND MAGICAL BELIEFS AND RITUAL

The concept of the high-god Lesa is common to the Bemba-speaking peoples. *Lesa*, the creator, is regarded rather as a nature force than a personal deity and is not the object of an organised cult. He manifests himself in thunder, lightning, and the rainbow and can kill by lightning or epidemics, but generally interferes little.

The *ngulu*, nature spirits residing in animals, trees, stones, hills, caves, ponds, waterfalls, can bring good weather and crops and are prayed to in an emergency. This cult is of non-Lunda origin and has probably come from the Chishinga, Lungu and Bemba country. Most of the dwelling-places of these spirits are found on the escarpment hills and on the plateau. The *mfumu ya mipashi* (chiefs of spirits), which can enter and possess people making them dance, are local deities whose beneficient activity is confined to the village or district.

When the general well-being of the community was concerned the spirits of dead Kazembes, *masamos*, were consulted and presented with offerings of cassava, beer and goats. Kazembes were buried at a place north-east of the old capital with which it was connected by a broad pathway(4) still discernible. Each had a shrine which was tended by a guardian-priest, *mwine masamo*,(5) whose office was hereditary. These keepers of the royal graves sought the advice of the oracle when war was contemplated and invoked the assistance of the spirits.(6) The River Lualaba, in which Kazembe the founder of the dynasty rests, was held in veneration. Processions went there annually at harvesting time. It is said that Keleka was the first Kazembe who failed to lead the procession in person, and the famine and smallpox epidemic which later occurred were attributed to his negligence.(7) The Kazembe is said to have been the highest religious authority.(8)

Carved wooden figures representing dead ancestors (*nkisi*) were kept in special huts and received offerings of beer, cassava, flour, hemp and tobacco.(9) Kazembe had several such figures, some named after dead chiefs, which were carried before the army in battle.(10)

(1) Valdez, II, p.242.
(2) Burton, p.128.
(3) Valdez, op.cit., p.243.
(4) Valdez, II, p.231.
(5) Burton, p.103.
(6) Valdez, op.cit., p.248.
(7) Valdez, II, p.257.
(8) ibid., p.243.
(9) Livingstone, I, p.353.
(10) ibid.